

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft Oral History Project

Interview Outline

1) Illinois Politics & Constitution:

Independent Voters of Illinois & independent Democrats

Committee on Illinois Government

The Chicago Democratic Machine

Bedsheet Ballot & Baker v Carr decision

Reform initiatives in the state legislature

Kerner Commission

1970 Constitutional Convention

 Merit Selection of Judges

 Home Rule

Nixon's War on Crime

1972 Gubernatorial election (Simon & Walker in Democratic Primary)

1972-1974 Watergate

1973 and the Kerner conviction

1974 legislative elections

1975 Speaker battle & selection of William Redmond

1976 Gubernatorial election (Walker v Howlett in Democratic Primary)

1978/1980 & Cutback Amendment

Pat Quinn & Citizens' Utility Board

Equal Rights Amendment fights, 1972-1982

Redistricting in 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

1982 Gubernatorial election – Thompson v Stephenson

1986 Gubernatorial – Thompson, Stephenson & LaRouch candidates

Barack Obama in the Illinois State Senate

Tort reform

2) Education

 Funding for Education

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Chicago school reform

Higher education reform

School funding baseline

IL Teachers Union(s) [IEA and IFT] & Teachers Retirement System

School district reorganization

3) The Economy & Revenues

Adoption of the state Income Tax in 1969

Recession of late 1970s

Banking reform initiatives

Income Tax surcharge of 1989 & extension in 1991

Budgeting process & yearly budget battles

Budget battles in 1991 & 1992

Build Illinois

Telecommunications regulation and de-regulation

Gambling and gaming regulations

Illinois First

4) Environment

EPA

Flood of 1993

5) Social Services

Americans with Disabilities Act

1988 Court case on DCFS caseloads

Adoption reforms

Dept. of Human Services created in 1997

6) Corruption & Ethics Reform

Chicago machine politics

Racetrack stock & Otto Kerner

Paul Powell & the shoebox full of money

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Shakman decree

Dan Walker guilty plea for S&L abuses

Rutan decision (June 1990) & political patronage in Illinois

MSI (Management Services of Illinois)

1998 ethics reform

'License for bribe' scandal

George Ryan conviction

2002-'03 ethics reform

Blagojevich impeachment

Abuses of power during the Blagojevich administration

Selling of the Obama Senate seat

Blagojevich conviction

Ongoing ethics reforms

7) Veterans Affairs

8) Social Issues

Abortion

Gun control

Welfare reform

Marriage & Divorce law

Gay rights

9) Administration & governance

Technological innovation & governance

Department consolidation

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency – July 1, 1985

Department of Natural Resource – July 1, 1995

Department of Human Services – July 1, 1997

Creation of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

Public Sector Unions

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10) Crime & security legislation

- Class X crimes during Thompson Administration

- Dept. of Corrections & prison construction

- DUI legislation & Mandatory driver's license

- Impact of 9-11 and War on Terror

- Death Penalty

11) Chicago related issues

- 1968 Democratic Convention

- Chicago vs DuPage County politics

- Regional Transit Authority

- Meigs Field

- O'Hare Airport Expansion

- Chicago's third Airport

- McCormick Place expansion

- Chicago school reform

- White Sox park (U.S. Cellular Field opens in 1991) & renovation of Soldier Field

Illinois Statecraft Interview Outline

Illinois Statecraft Name

Introductory Information: State at the beginning of the interview:

- Interviewer's name (State your name)
- Date and place of the interview
- Name of the person being interviewed
- "This interview is part of the ALPL
Illinois Statecraft Oral History project"

I. Background information

A. When and where were you born?

B. Parent's background?

1. Father:

a. His occupation?

b. How would you describe his personality?

2. Mother:

a. Did she work?

b. How would you describe her?

3. Which parent did you take after?

C. Other siblings & immediate family?

D. Was the family religious?

E. What is your earliest memory?

II. Where did you grow up?

A. Tell me about the neighborhood?

B. The schools you attended?

C. Was your family involved with politics when you were growing up?

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D. Where did you attend High School? [_____ Graduation year?]

1. Extracurricular activities?
2. Did you have a job during High School?
3. What were your favorite subjects?
4. Your plans following High School?

E. Who were your mentors growing up?

1. Who had the strongest influence on you?

III. Young adult years:

A. What led to your decision to go to college?

B. University of Chicago years: [_____? thru _____]

1. Your major while there?
2. How did you pay for college? Scholarship?
3. Were you working while going to school?
4. What were your career aspirations?
5. Were your political views evolving while in college?
 - a. What were the issues that motivated you?

C. Review of political events during these years?

D. Your political philosophy/beliefs.

E. Individual(s) or events that helped shape those views.

IV. Early career years?

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V. VII. Political career. (Secretary of the Senate Republican Caucus: 1965-1981)

Recommend that this portion of the interview – the heart of the interview – be organized chronologically, based on the interviewee’s political career.

Campaigns:

Main theme & issues?

Political figures of the day?

Opponent?

Strategy?

Controversies during the campaign?

Election results?

The challenges of fund-raising?

The impact on your family life?

Your relationship with the media?

VIII. The decision to retire:

IX. Life after the political arena:

IX. Concluding questions: (Ask reflective comments that get the subject to look back on his/her entire career. Some examples, below.)

A. The accomplishment(s) for which you are most proud?

B. Your most exhilarating moment?

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- C. Your most disappointing failure (in the public arena.)
- D. Your most painful experience?
- E. How your views have evolved / been strengthened over your career?
- F. What do you would want to be remembered for.
- H. Closing comments.